

DENTAL CHEW ROLL AND METHOD OF MAKING THE SAME

RELATED APPLICATIONS: This application claims priority to provisional application S.N. 60/470,702, filed May 15, 2003, incorporated herein by reference.

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FIELD OF INVENTION

This invention is related to dog chews, and more particularly to a chew roll for dogs that is infused with a flavor and/or color. The chew roll is preferably made from animal hide and has cuts to increase its effective surface area. The roll is more attractive to animals and its enhanced flavor and color characteristics will induce the animals to chew the roll for a longer time.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

A known rawhide for a dog is made from animal hide, particularly from cow hide. Cow hide from a tannery is cleaned so that it does not have any meat or other undesirable deposits. As part of the cleaning process, the cow hide is washed by water, delimed, degreased, bleached and washed again. The cleaned hide is then dried, and then cut to pieces. The cut pieces are formed into predetermined shape, such as a roll having the general shape of a bone.

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Next, flavors and colors are added by basting the rolled hide piece under static conditions, i.e., without agitation or other active means of speeding up infusion. The pre-formed and pre-dried rawhide is then dried a second time.

5 This process and the resulting product have several disadvantages. First, the flavors and colors form a coating only to the outer surface of the product. Another disadvantage is that even on the outer surface, the coating is uneven, giving the product an esthetically undesirable and unpleasant appearance. A third disadvantage is that the process requires
10 two different drying steps. Therefore the process is time consuming, inefficient and wastes energy.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly, chews roll are prepared in accordance with this invention as
15 follows. An animal hide is cleaned and processed. The cleaned hide is then infused with flavor and color, cut into hide pieces and formed into rolls, each roll having a body with a generally cylindrical shape and two
 ends with strips extending generally longitudinally, in parallel to the axis of the roll. The roll is also provided with cuts that form crescent-shaped
20 windows. The roll is then dried.

 This process allows the flavors and colors to coat and penetrate

the hide in a uniformed, consistent manner. The coating extends over both outer and inner surfaces of the roll. Only one drying step is used to save heating energy and heating equipment as compared to a traditional basting process. Preferably during infusion, the hide and the bath in which the hide is introduced are agitated to speed the coating and infusion process.

As discussed above, traditionally, flavor and color was added to the hide by basting. The invention provides a new way to add color and flavor uniformly to the inner and outer surface of the dog chew, and eliminates a drying step. Moreover the resulting product has a unique physical shape combining the advantage of long last chewing and more effective teeth cleaning into one chewing toy.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 shows a flow chart for the process for making the dog chew roll in accordance with this invention;

Fig. 2 shows a plan view of a hide piece shaped to form a roll; and

Fig. 3 shows the completed dog chew roll.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The novel method of making dental chew rolls and their structure is

now described in conjunction with the figures. Starting with Fig. 1, step 100, a hide from a tannery, or other sources, is prepared and cleaned so that it can be used to make chew rolls. This step may include several standard processes, such as washing with water, deliming, degreasing and bleaching. Some of these processes may be repeated, if necessary. The hide is preferably cow hide, however, other hides can be used, including hides from beef, pigs, and other animals.

The clean hide is then treated or infused with flavors and coloring materials in step 102 using a bath or slurry. Flavors, such as meat flavors, and colors for chew chips and other pet products are well known in the art. Generally, food flavors may include natural ingredients such as meats and meat byproducts derived from poultry, beef, pork, lamb, smoke and other materials, including flavor enhancers. Food colors may be added separately, or the flavor ingredients may have coloring characteristics as well, in which case separate color ingredients may not be required. For example, a smoke flavor also provides color to the final product.

In the present invention, a bath is prepared by adding flavor and color to water and mixing thoroughly, until the bath is uniform. The bath is introduced into a drum (or alternatively, the bath ingredients are added and mixed within the drum). A different type of container may be used for the bath as well.

Next, the hide is introduced into the drum and submerged into the bath. Initially, the hide may have a water content of about 60-80%. After the hide is introduced into the bath, the hide and the bath are mixed, using, for instance, mechanical agitation, for sufficient time to allow the flavor and color ingredients to infuse the hide thoroughly. The concentration of flavors and colors in the bath are selected so that they are high enough to insure the infusion takes place quickly and efficiently.

After infusion, the drum is drained, and the hide is removed.

Next, in step 104 the infused hide is cut into smaller, generally rectangular pieces. One such hide piece is shown in Fig. 2. It should be understood that while the sides of the hide piece are shown as being straight, they may be curved or may have an irregular shape. Importantly, a plurality of longitudinal cuts 12 are made on the lateral sides of the hide pieces to define therebetween elongated hide strips 14. Typically, each strip may be about 2.5 and 8 cm. long and about 1.0 cm. wide. Additional cuts 16 may also be provided in the flat portion of the hide piece disposed between the strips 14. The cuts 16 may have arcuate shapes, as indicated in Fig. 2. The cuts 12, 16 may be made at the same time as the hide piece 10 is cut from the hide, using for example a die, or may be made in the hide piece at a later time.

As part of step 104, the hide piece 10 is rolled into a generally

cylindrical form. The rolled up piece is maintained in this shape by applying a food grade adhesive, or by other similar means.

In step 106 a plurality of flavored and rolled up hide pieces are dried using standard techniques. For example, the flavored hide pieces can be deposited on a tray and inserted in an oven where they are kept for up to seven days at 35 -85° C.

The finished chew roll 20 is shown in Fig. 3. As can be seen in this Figure, the hide piece of Fig. 3 is rolled up spirally to form a cylindrical shape with strips 14 extending somewhat longitudinally from the main body of the roll to form streamers. The cuts 16 form crescent-shaped windows 22 on the lateral cylindrical surface 24 of the roll that allow the flavors and colors to penetrate the internal surfaces of the roll and to make the roll easier to chew. The overall length of the chew roll of Fig. 3 is between about 4 and 9 inches, with a diameter of between about 2.0 and 4.0 cm.

When a dog chews the center part of the roll, this part will act as a toothbrush to clean the surfaces of the dog's teeth. This action is assisted by the windows 22 which are penetrated by the dog's teeth. When the dog chews on the ends, the strips 16 act as a floss to clean the spaces between the teeth.

To summarize, a cleaned hide is coated or infused with flavor and

(optionally) color, then cut, formed and dried to form dental chew rolls with a plurality of internal cuts and strips or streamers at the two ends. This process allows the flavors and colors to be applied to the hide in a uniform, consistent way. The flavors and colors are infused in both the outer and inner surfaces of the rolls.

The resulting dental chew rolls provide much more contact surface between the dog teeth and the dental chew rolls and make the product clean the dog teeth more effectively.

The inventive process for making dental chew rolls may be modified to achieve various beneficial results. For example, the infusion can be performed in vacuum or under pressure. This type of process may cause the flavors and colors to penetrate and infuse the hide faster.

While the invention has been described with reference to several particular embodiments, it is to be understood that these embodiments are merely illustrative of the principles of the invention. Accordingly, the embodiments described in particular should be considered as exemplary, not limiting, with respect to the following claims.